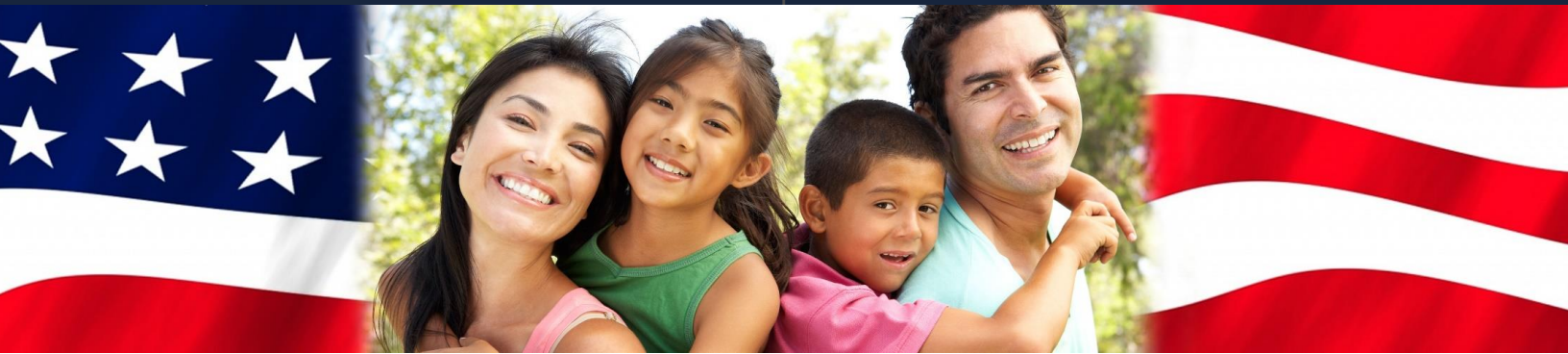


# TOP 10 MISTAKES TO AVOID WHEN FILING IMMIGRATION APPLICATIONS



I know that many people file immigration applications on their own and go through the process without the assistance of an attorney. I know this because many of you end up in my office due to something bad that happened to your case and you need our help to try to fix it. Which of course we are always happy to do!

Here's my **TOP TEN LIST** of mistakes you all make and that you need to avoid when you self-file:

## **1. You forget to sign the application.**

Yes, yes, this actually happens! Please sign the application, or it will be mailed back to you, causing delays in your case.

## **2. You don't include the correct filing fee.**

If you don't include the correct fee, USCIS will send the application back to you, of course. Check the USCIS website for the most current fee for your form.

## **3. You send it to the wrong USCIS office.**

You should always go to the USCIS website to see where to send your application. Even if the application in your hand says to send it somewhere, you should check the website to make sure that is still the current address. Just like fees, these addresses can change.

## **4. You don't include the right supporting documentation for your form.**

I once had a client who was petitioning for his wife. He sent only the form - no marriage certificate and no proof of his U.S. Citizenship. Guess what happened? Eight months later, USCIS denied the petition because there was no evidence at all submitted with it. This particular client had gone to the Norfolk USCIS office and asked the Officer "if this was all I have to send in?" The Officer said, "yes, this is all you have to send in." Obviously, there was a miscommunication. The client took it literally and sent nothing in except the application and the filing fee. He lost 8 months! We had to re-file and start all over. Needless to say, his wife was not happy! It has a happy ending, but still, that was an extremely stressful time for my client and his wife.

## **5. You don't change your address properly when you move.**

Many times, USCIS will ask for additional evidence, especially for people who file on their own. But when you move and don't inform them, then you will not get that request. If you don't respond, your case will be denied.

## **6. You don't put the correct names on the application.**

If your name on your birth certificate is Radlyn Mendoza Deleon, with Mendoza being your father's last name and Deleon being your mother's last name, that is the name you put on the application. Many people will make Deleon the middle name (not correct) on the application. Use the name on your birth certificate, not the one you are using in the U.S. Another thing we see is when clients drop one of the names. No, you can't do that. Just because you are not using your mother's maiden name as part of your last name anymore doesn't mean it disappears on the application.

## **7. You don't tell the truth on the form.**

Some of you purposefully do this, some of you do it inadvertently. But you need to tell the truth on the application or form you're filling out, end of story. If you're thinking about omitting something, you most likely should be talking to an immigration lawyer to help you.

## **8. You file the wrong form for the type of case that you have.**

I have written about the brother who filed the green card application for his brother who was visiting on a tourist visa, not realizing that there was no way in the world he could file that form under those circumstances. Guess who lost \$1,070 in filing fees with the case denied in the end? If you're not sure come talk to me!



**Gardner & Mendoza, P.C.**

*Your rights are important, let us protect them*

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**9. You hire a Notario to look over things and help you with your case.**

Ay! Please do not do this! I have written about the abuse of Notarios I've seen over the 18 years I've been an immigration lawyer. No, no, no! Please. Using an experienced immigration lawyer is a far better choice over a notario. Many times, our legal fees are cheaper, plus, we are licensed to practice and if anything goes wrong, we have a Bar (our governing body) that you can complain to. There is no such thing with Notarios. One day they're here, the next they're not.

**And here's the BIGGEST mistake people make when filing their immigration applications:**

**10. They don't hire me to help them with their case.**

Avoid this mistake, my friends. Some of you think you can't afford to hire me. What you need to know is that you can't afford NOT to hire me. Come talk to me for a consultation. At our initial consultation, whether it's in person, via Skype or on the phone, I will go over your case with you in great detail. I will fully assess your case, explain your options, and give you an estimated timeframe of how long your case will take. I'll talk to you like I'm talking a member of my family. You will feel comfortable and happy that you came to see me.



Is it worth \$125, which is my consultation fee, and 45 minutes of your time to see if you're going in the right direction? To see that you're sending your thousands of dollars to the right USCIS office? That you're filing the right application? That your criminal or traffic charge or conviction is not going to get you deported or prevent you from applying for Citizenship? That your family member is going to get the green card? That you're not checking one wrong box that will delay your case for months, even years?

The answer of course is, yes, it's worth it. Calling me for a consultation for your immigration case just might be the smartest thing you do for yourself this year. Do it now, not in a couple days or a couple of weeks. Do it now while you're thinking about it and have momentum toward finding the solution you need. We ARE that solution. Here's why...



I'm Radlyn Mendoza, co-founder of **Gardner & Mendoza, P.C.**, the premier Virginia Beach law firm that specializes in immigration, traffic and criminal cases. That's me in the picture on the right with my husband and law partner, John Gardner. Our friends call us a force multiplier ... he's been my husband and law partner for more than 18 years. And we're joined by our amazing and very friendly staff whose number one priority is to provide you with excellent service. I mention my husband to you just so you'll understand that I have direct access to a second legal mind to analyze and research all of my cases – not just in the office, but at the dinner table, too! We're a husband and wife team with over 18 years of legal experience helping people like you and getting positive immigration results!

With that in mind, we're a perfect team to provide you with the representation and protection you need right now. And the sooner I hear from you, the sooner I can get working on your case and help you get that immigration benefit you are looking for. We'll guide you every step of the way, start to finish.

**Call me today at 757-464-9224 and we'll schedule a consultation right away.**

You can also send me an email at [info@gmlaw.net](mailto:info@gmlaw.net) to schedule an appointment.



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